

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY (v.1)

DRAFT - NOT APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

RIVER AND PLATEAU COMMITTEE

May 15, 2001

Richland, WA

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Committee business

Susan Leckband, vice-chair, opened the meeting and explained that she would chair the meeting since the committee's chair, Pam Brown, could not be present. Committee members introduced themselves and addressed committee business. The April meeting summary was approved. Gordon Rogers reported that he saw no need for further action from the committee on responses to past advice on the Hanford 2012 plan. He summarized that the responses from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) recognized that there were problems to be resolved but had no fundamental objections because it is a work in progress.

The committee briefly discussed the HAB's letter to Carolyn Huntoon, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Environmental Management Program. The HAB had objected to DOE Headquarters' approval of all RCRA permits and RODS. In her response, Huntoon objected to the HAB's points. The committee considered further action, but dropped the issue since it had not been formal advice (because of timing) and because Dennis Faulk, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported that, so far, the decision-making authority change has not impacted local decisions.

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, reminded attendees to sign in, as sign-in sheets are an integral part of travel reimbursements.

Update on Long-Term Stewardship

Susan Leckband gave an update on Long-Term Stewardship, having spoken with Jim Daily, DOE-RL, earlier in the week. In light of the budget shortfall and reprioritization, there is not enough money or people for the Department of Energy – Richland Office (DOE-RL) to complete the entire Long-Term Stewardship plan on schedule. Instead, DOE-RL will do the Institutional Control (IC) portion of the plan as Attachment A to the full plan. Mr. Daily will provide a draft of the IC portion to a workshop group on or before the June Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) meeting. The complete Long-Term Stewardship plan will be finished in September.

B-Reactor

Madeleine Brown, Issue Manager for the B-Reactor, introduced the issue by reporting the information she had gathered (distributed to meeting attendees in a handout). The HAB is looking at the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) for the B-Reactor because cleanup is necessary and the B-Reactor is already a de facto public museum. The EE/CA will go out for review later this month. The B-Reactor must be cleaned up under Superfund and because it has historic relevance. Ms. Brown read the list of issues from the committee's Work Planning Table (available as a handout). Some additional issues are the relationship between the B-Reactor and the Hanford Reach National Monument, would people feel safe visiting a museum, what stories should be told at the museum, and should there be a link to DOE-RL's Long-Term Stewardship plan? DOE is prepared to draft an Environmental Assessment and cost evaluation.

B-Reactor presentation

Ella Coenenberg, CH2MHill, presented information about the EE/CA (available as a handout). The EE/CA provides background on historical significance, describes the B-Reactor facility, evaluates interim removal action alternatives, and recommends an alternative. The B-Reactor is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the land use is designated for high-intensity recreation, and DOE has not yet determined its final configuration for long-term use.

Three interim removal actions are being evaluated. 1) "No Action" maintains general institutional controls (fences, signs), but does not prevent further deterioration. No costs are incurred with this alternative. 2) The "Surveillance and Maintenance" alternative sustains the B-Reactor in a minimum safe condition for the next 10 years at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. The B-Reactor would not become a museum. 3) The "Hazard Mitigation for Public Access" alternative maintains the B-Reactor as historic property, provides infrastructure upgrades, removes hazards, and conducts routine safety and maintenance to protect workers and the public. This is the recommended alternative and the cost is estimated at \$3.0 million.

The EE/CA will be available for public comment June 18th through July 17th and there will be a public meeting June 26th. Ms. Coenenberg anticipates an action memorandum in August, and if funding is available, mitigation would start in October.

Committee Discussion

- Are the costs estimated per year or over ten years? The costs are based on the estimated cost of all activities.
- A committee member thought work should be bundled into efficient packages. Ms. Coenenberg agreed.
- What is the source of money for this project? Does it use money from the remediation budget? Chris Smith, DOE-RL, answered that the funding is hazard mitigation funding. DOE is fulfilling its cleanup commitment to the EPA.
- Is funding for programming, staffing, etc. included in this budget? No, those are not within this plan.
- There was a question about the permanence of the EE/CA's recommendations. Mr. Smith explained that DOE-RL used existing Records of Decision (RODs) and a duration of 10 years. The 10-year window gives DOE-RL and stakeholders enough time to review the plans and conduct analyses of what to do in the future outside that 10-year window.
- A committee member questioned the assumption that the museum should be a part of Richland, and asked whether Benton County has been consulted on taking over the B-Reactor. Other committee members clarified that currently the emphasis is on hazard mitigation without compromising the facility's historic character. Mr. Smith added that while another agency could run the museum, DOE (or its successor) would maintain ownership and liability because the core will remain intact.
- Is current funding the same level needed for future mitigation? Dennis Faulk, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), responded that if the alternative includes cocooning, EPA would remove the facility. The fuel storage basin has historical significance, but since it is expensive to clean up, the EE/CA looks at installing shielding so the basin could still be viewed.
- What is the problem with the fuel storage basin? The walls are contaminated and there is sludge at the bottom.
- Where are copies of the EE/CA available? Mr. Smith answered that currently the EE/CA is in a DOE internal review. It was approved for distribution to the HAB Issue Managers, but the official version will be released in June for public comment.
- Will the core be removed in 75 years? Mr. Faulk answered to do so is in the ROD.

The other issue manager is Wade Riggsbee, who could not attend the meeting. Ms. Browne reported that he had told her that the Yakama are concerned with where the core goes in 75 years. In this sense, the EE/CA is good because it does not preclude disposition of the reactor.

There was a discussion about access to the facility. Currently DOE does not allow people under 18 to enter the site, but committee members agreed that the museum should be available to all members of the public, regardless of age. The committee also decided that cleanup funding should pay for hazard mitigation but other funding sources should be used for things like bathrooms, exhibits, etc.

There was some confusion on whether the B-Reactor is located within the boundaries of the National Monument. Madeleine Brown clarified that it is 0.25 miles outside the monument. Mr. Faulk thought DOE should explain to the public more clearly what is and is not within the monument. Jamie Ziesloff, DOE-RL, said DOE-RL is looking at establishing the boundaries and management issues. He said whether the B-Reactor was managed through the monument or the refuge does not matter, since if DOE-RL can't add the B-Reactor to the monument it will add it to the refuge.

A committee member raised a concern about long-term retention, calling for some kind of guaranteed funding for maintenance. He pointed out that historically the Bureau of Land Management and Fish & Wildlife have had a hard time with maintenance funding for things like roads. Because this is a hazardous site, long-term funding should be secured.

The committee discussed the type of advice it should give and decided that the HAB should encourage DOE-RL to make the B-Reactor into a museum and ask for milestones and a cleanup schedule. Ms. Brown had prepared advice kernels, which the committee discussed and refined. The committee agreed that advice should be about supporting the preferred alternative in the EE/CA and the level of cleanup, while the Public Involvement and Communication (PIC) Committee should develop advice on the museum's appropriateness and other public information issues. The EE/CA and cleanup advice would be prepared for the June HAB meeting. Ms. Brown agreed to make changes to the advice based on the committee's discussion and to take the revised advice to the PIC committee. She will distribute a final version to both committees for additional comments.

Regulator Perspectives

EPA

- Dennis Faulk, EPA, commented that DOE-RL owed EPA a feasibility study for the museum, but the study only looked at the tour route, not hazard mitigation. Since EPA wanted a publicly acceptable document, DOE used the EE/CA. Mr. Faulk commended DOE-RL's assessment of the project's full cost, since the EE/CA lists hazard mitigations required for each room in the facility. Mr. Faulk noted that the major hazard in the facility is the fuel storage basin and the cost to mitigate that would be high. The standard cocooning cost is included in the plan.
- Mr. Faulk was very pleased with the EE/CA, but he is requiring a schedule of cost and cleanup. He estimates it will cost \$1 million in the near-term to do the hazard mitigation. He added that the EE/CA includes a risk scenario so dose rates will be known, and that DOE-RL needs to take care of the radon problem.

- Overall, EPA thinks the EE/CA outlines the best near-term course of action; future evaluations could take into account facility usage and how much structural upgrades will cost.
- Mr. Faulk urged the committee to issue advice, which may help the EPA expand access to the museum.
- Mr. Faulk asked the committee for feedback on whether there is interest for a public meeting outside the Tri-Cities on the B-Reactor.

Letter regarding EM Secretary's Review

HAB Chair Todd Martin distributed a copy of the letter he had drafted on behalf of the HAB. He explained that during the previous Executive Issues Committee conference call, participants decided that the HAB should write a letter offering to assist in the Energy Secretary's Top-to-Bottom review. Mr. Martin is asking all committees for feedback and modifications, so the letter may be adopted at the June HAB meeting; the review is quietly happening now, so this is a timely issue. The committee agreed to the letter, but suggested that it should include a few specific examples of advice the HAB has given. These examples would show good ideas the HAB has suggested that either were or were not heeded.

Waste Management Issues

Issue Manager Dan Simpson reported on the review he, co-Issue Manager Wade Riggsbee, and Fred Jamison of Ecology had conducted of DOE-RL's Waste Management Strategic Plan. They reviewed the document, prepared questions, discussed the plan with George Sanders, DOE-RL, and drafted a joint letter for the committee to approve. The letter contains questions about the Waste Management Strategic Plan, and Mr. Simpson explained that the letter could serve as an information-gathering device for the committee. If all the questions were answered and the answers were reasonable then advice would not be necessary. If any answers revealed a deficiency in the plan, then advice could be drafted. Mr. Jamison explained that the letter identifies topics about which Ecology would also like more information and detail, particularly about waste management in the long-term.

Committee Discussion

- A committee member expressed concern that DOE-RL is issuing a strategic plan without conducting the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on solid waste disposal. The HAB might be viewed as endorsing the strategic plan, an inappropriate vehicle to answer questions that should be addressed in an EIS. Mr. Sanders responded that the strategic plan was supposed to be an operational plan for the Waste Management program. It was not intended to be a program for unique decisions, but instead serve as a communication vehicle to capture DOE-RL's current assumptions about what the Waste Management program entailed. When the Solid Waste ROD is issued, DOE-RL will change the strategic plan to reflect the EIS ROD. At the committee's request, Mr. Sanders agreed to 1) return to the committee's next meeting

and answer the committee's questions and 2) work to arrange for the right people to be present to answer questions he couldn't.

- You say the plan isn't locked in concrete, but calling it a strategic plan sounds like it is locked. What about calling it a working plan? Mr. Sanders answered that Webster defines strategies as plans and reiterated that the plan is a flexible document.
- What is the new date the Solid Waste EIS will be issued? A draft will be out in December. DOE-HQ sent a letter to the State that said public review will occur in April, 2002. One year after that, a ROD will be issued.

The committee will evaluate whether advice is necessary after hearing Mr. Sanders' answers at the next committee meeting.

Low-level Burial Ground Expansion Environmental Assessment

Doug Huston made a presentation on behalf of Dirk Dunning, the issue manager for the Low-level Burial Ground Environmental Assessment (EA). A handout summarizing the presentation was distributed. In February of this year, DOE issued EA 1373 to site up to four new low-level burial grounds: two in 200 East, and two in 200 West. New trenches will be inserted between existing trenches.

Committee Discussion

- Has there been a finding of no significance? Mr. Huston reported that nothing has been issued yet.
- Groundwater issue manager Gerry Pollet distributed draft advice he had written on groundwater monitoring for the River and Plateau committee's joint meeting with the Budgets and Contracts committee. He urged the committee to issue advice saying that it is inappropriate to expand the burial grounds without an EIS. The groundwater monitoring around the grounds is inadequate and should have already been characterized. Mr. Pollet pointed out that the proposed trenches will be put between trenches where mixed waste and liquids have been improperly disposed, so it is unknown how the trenches will maintain their integrity without a full characterization. In addition, these burial grounds are part of a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) interim status unit but fail to meet RCRA standards.
- Mr. Pollet reminded the committee that the State has commented that it is inappropriate to rely on an EA instead of an EIS. This is the third EA that has been submitted to ahead of the Hanford EIS. This EA does not present enough detail.
- Doug Huston reported that the State of Oregon commented that it is logically inconsistent to do an EA when doing an EIS on same subject, and making a finding of no significance isn't logical.
- A committee member commented that the EA cumulative impacts section classified the impact as insignificant. Fred Jamison reported that Ecology disputed that finding. Ecology is also concerned with the logic flaw of conducting a third EA. Ecology has concerns about long-term issues, such as how the groundwater is affected.

- A committee member expressed concern over Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's (PNNL) budget being cut, which may hinder the monitoring of groundwater – PNNL's training may be reduced for these activities, for example.
- What is the capacity for disposal currently? How much capacity exists for Hanford waste currently? Mr. Huston reported that the EA says within the next few years the capacity will be filled (which includes off site waste). Mr. Sanders pointed out that DOE-RL does not have the authority to decide off-site waste issues.
- Mr. Sanders explained that DOE-RL did have money identified for building additional trenches out of Parks Township money. That money expires September 30th, so DOE-RL must either built those trenches by then or lose the money, about \$120,000.
- Does DOE-RL already have negative comments from people who have reviewed this plan? A DOE-RL representative suggested the committee look at the previous comments then decide if it wants to add anything.
- On the map of the west burial grounds, the expansion area is shown but is not covered in the EA. On the website version, that's not in the map. Is that area in your Strategic Plan? Where did it come from? Mr. Sanders answered that DOE-RL had marked an area of possible future expansions, but has no specific expansion plans currently; expansion is volume dependent.
- Why are you putting new trenches in between existing trenches with serious questions about content and interrelated impact when you have a different location? Mr. Sanders responded that a programmatic EIS ROD says that the Hanford site will be used for low-level site waste dumping.
- How does the EIS work with off-site waste generators? Are there contracts? What is the process? Mr. Sanders answered that there are agreements between DOE sites based on annual volumetric projections. Since all the waste generators are DOE, there are not commercial contracts. If DOE-RL gets a finding of significant impact and the volume estimate changes, the plans are reexamined.
- Does DOE-RL have the ability to forbid off-site waste? No, Hanford is a national resource and DOE-RL lacks the authority to direct off-site waste elsewhere
- Are there any plans to do characterizations where we're not sure of that waste? The State examines a few islands of waste, and DOE-RL understands where the RCRA transgressions were. The rest of the waste going in is low-level waste, and DOE-RL is rigorously looking at it to make sure it is not hazardous.
- Gerry Pollet mentioned that Heart of America Northwest has conducted an extensive review of records, from which it is clear that both in recent years and in the past, inappropriate off-site waste has been accepted. Beth Bilson, DOE-RL, encouraged him to share that information with the State.

DOE-RL representatives emphasized that the EA public comment period was extended to June 14th solely at the request of the HAB. Mr. Sanders encouraged the committee to go on record with advice, even if just repeating previous comments.

Regulator Perspectives

Ecology

- Fred Jamison reported that Ecology is concerned about groundwater monitoring and has received many comments on it.

Remote-handled TRU

The issue managers for remote-handled trans-uranic waste (TRU) were not present. Mr. Sanders updated the committee on the status of the possibility of Battelle Columbus sending TRU to Hanford. It is an idea and discussions are ongoing but no decisions have been made yet. The decision will be based on the budget, so there will be no firm decision until October 1st.

- Can you make a provision to receive the full cost if it comes here? Beth Bilson, DOE-RL, answered that DOE-RL is not able to carry and protect those funds for that period of time. All conversations so far have included full funding, but every time DOE-RL shows a high carry over, Congress takes that money away.
- Will the Hanford budget pay for the waste if it comes here? No, offsite generators have to pay.
- New Mexico says it doesn't even know its permitting details yet; will Hanford have to pay to repackage and characterize the waste? No, DOE-RL is just signing up to store the waste, not characterize it. DOE-RL is pushing the other sites to get all of these details taken care of up front. We're not recommending this as the best path forward for the DOE complex. At this point we're trying to identify exactly what they're talking about. We have a tight budget, so there is not a lot of room for taking on unfunded stuff.

Pam Brown, the committee's issue manager will continue to follow the issue.

Work planning

The committee decided to request a full day meeting in June so it can hear George Sanders' answers to the committee's questions about the Waste Management Strategic Plan, and devote either the entire morning or afternoon to discussing the Central Plateau. Dan Simpson will give a five-minute update to the HAB in June about the EA and EIS and Waste Management Strategic Plan. The committee decided to see how the Long-Term Stewardship plan relates to the Waste Management strategic plan, EA, and EIS before coming up with advice. The committee also wanted definition on the National Monument to understand how it relates to the B-Reactor.

Penny Mabie passed along an announcement from Shelley Cimon: there will be a Groundwater workshop in November at the Savannah River site. Ten people from each Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) may attend the workshop. A workshop-planning group is being established that will be composed of two people from each Site Specific

Advisory Board. The workshop planners need to be identified by May 20th. Gordon Rogers and Doug Huston volunteered to participate in the planning group.

The committee discussed other issues of interest: treatment planning on uranium drums and Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) negotiations for TPA milestones starting June 1, 2001. The committee developed a work plan for PFP, the details of which appear on the most recent work planning table.

Then the committee established a standing “committee call.” This call will serve as a check-in as well as an agenda-setting call. It will occur on the third Tuesday of the month at 9:00 am, but since committee week was pushed back this month, the next call will be on Tuesday, May 22nd. Committee members then agreed to request Tuesday (in the Federal Building) as its June meeting day.

Susan Leckband and Doug Huston will represent the committee on the EIC call.

Handouts

- River and Plateau Committee Draft Meeting Agenda, May 15, 2001
- River and Plateau Committee Work Planning Table, April 10, 2001
- Hanford Advisory Board: Issue Manager Matrix, May 15, 2001
- Madeleine Brown’s B-Reactor Issue Background, Status, and Recommendations, May 15, 2001
- 105-B Reactor Engineering Evaluation/Cost Evaluation (EE/CA) Presentation by DOE-RL, May 15, 2001
- Letter from Todd Martin to All HAB Committees regarding EM Top-to-Bottom Review, May 14, 2001
- Draft letter to George Sanders, Director of DOE-RL Waste Management Division, May 7, 2001
- Gerry Pollet’s Draft Advice for Hanford Advisory Board “Budget is Legally Inadequate for Groundwater Protection and Remediation,” May 2001.
- Low Level Burial Grounds Environmental Assessment Presentation, May 15, 2001

Attendees

HAB Members and Alternates

Madeleine Brown	Pam Brown (phone)	Tom Carpenter
Jim Hagar	Doug Huston	Dave Johnson
Bill Kinsella (phone)	Robin Klein	Susan Leckband
Todd Martin	Debra McBaugh (phone)	Maynard Plahuta
Gerry Pollet	Joe Richards	Gordon Rogers
David Rowland	Dan Simpson	Keith Smith

Others

Michael Collins, DOE-RL	Rick Bond, Ecology	Dru Butler, BHI
Mark French, DOE-RL	Fred Jamison, Ecology	Mike Hughes, BHI

Jim Goodenough, DOE-RL	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Nancy Myers, BHI
Gail McClure, DOE-RL		Robert Potter, BHI
John Morse, DOE-RL		Ella Coenenberg, CH2Mhill
George Sanders, DOE-RL		Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues
D. Chris Smith, DOE-RL		Christina Richmond, EnviroIssues
Mike Thompson, DOE-RL		Gloria Cummins, FHI
Jamie Zeisloft, DOE-RL		Rob Piippo, FHI
		Les Davenport, Public